

NEWS RELEASE



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CONVICTED FELON SENTENCED FOR POSSESSING FIREARM

Lake Charles, Louisiana woman possesses and pawns firearm while on parole

LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA . . .United States Attorney Donald W. Washington and ATF Special Agent in Charge Mark Chait announced that **WENONA MILLER**, age 34, from Lake Charles, Louisiana was sentenced in federal court today by United States District Judge Patricia Minaldi to 72 months (6 years) imprisonment to be followed by 3 years supervised release for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

The sentencing is the result of investigations by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Department, and the Lake Charles Police Department as a part of the Project Safe Neighborhoods gun crime reduction initiative, which in the Lake Charles area has been dubbed, "Operation Trigger Time." MILLER was indicted in December 2005 and pled guilty in March 2006.

Miller was convicted in Criminal District Court for the Parish of Orleans in September 1996 of the felony charge of attempted first degree robbery. In October 2003, while still on state parole, MILLER possessed and pawned a .44 caliber revolver at a pawn shop in Lake Charles, Louisiana.

It is a federal violation for a convicted felon to possess firearms and/or ammunition.

This case was prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide program begun in 2001, and designed to reduce violence in our communities by aggressively using existing federal firearms laws. United States Attorneys, District Attorneys, Sheriffs, Police Chiefs, and state officials have created partnerships to address crimes involving firearms. Generally, any arrest involving a firearm is reviewed immediately by local, state and federal authorities to decide whether the case is best suited for prosecution under state or federal law, or a combination of both. Project Safe Neighborhoods is expected to lead to longer prison terms for violent criminals, and a significant reduction in violent crime. To date, federal prosecutions under Project Safe Neighborhoods in the Western District of Louisiana have led to the incarceration of criminals responsible for violent crimes such as homicides, aggravated assaults, robbery, car jacking, burglary, and drug trafficking.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Larry J. Regan.

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